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# Classification Newsletter

## Edition 9 - October 2017

Welcome to the ninth edition of the British Paralympic Association's (BPA's) Classification Newsletter.

The newsletter provides an update each quarter on key classification activities that are taking place in the UK, along with important international developments.

The next edition of the BPA's Classification Newsletter will be issued in April 2017.

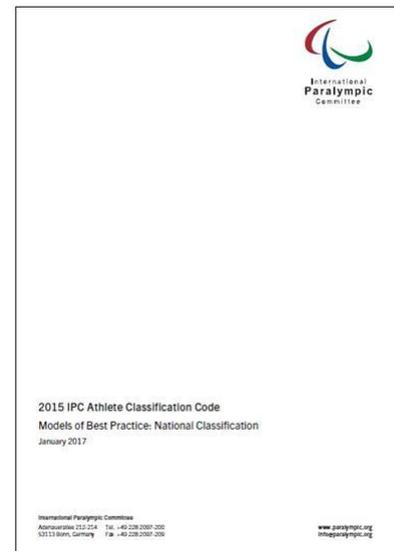
## BPA welcomes the publication of the IPC Model of Best Practice: National Classification

To support the implementation of the 2015 Athlete Classification Code, the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) have published a Model of Best Practice: National Classification.

The Model provides recommendations for delivering classification at a national level and is the first time the IPC have provided written direction of National Paralympic Committees' (NPC) role in classification.

BPA was amongst the NPCs that were part of the consultation process for producing the Model and is encouraged by NPCs' feedback being reflected in the published version.

The IPC Model of Best Practice: National Classification can be read via this [link](#).



## UK Paralympic Performance Conference - March 2017

The UK Paralympic Performance Conference, held on 29-30 March 2017 at St George's Park, Burton Upon Trent, will feature two sessions on classification.

A keynote on the first day will look back on classification during the Rio cycle, which saw the BPA appoint its first ever full-time Classification Manager. Accusations of intentional misrepresentation were front page news days before the Rio Paralympic Games opened and this keynote will look at the facts and the fiction of that hot topic.

The second day will include a workshop that will allow delegates to contribute towards the development of the UK's first National Classification Code.

The UK Paralympic Performance Conference is supported by UK Sport and is aimed at members of staff from Great Britain's National Governing Bodies of Sport who are allocated a number of subsidised places. Places at full cost are also available.

For more information on the conference please email: [conference2017@paralympics.org.uk](mailto:conference2017@paralympics.org.uk).



## Double Paralympic gold medallist opens Classification Workshop

Two-time Paralympic Champion John Walker opened the BPA's Classification Workshop on 12 January.

John shared his experience of maintaining his focus despite significant changes to Archery's classification system during the cycle - which saw a number of his teammates no longer eligible. Further changes are expected in the sport and John discussed how he plans to remain competitive despite these challenges.

That set the scene for the rest of the workshop, which was supported by UK Sport. It provided an opportunity to look back over the previous cycle before discussing future plans. Key staff from the National Governing Bodies of Athletics, Cycling, Canoe and Triathlon each presented on



specific issues they faced as well as how they approached them. The workshop closed with a group discussion looking ahead by establishing priority areas to focus on.

## **British Swimming supports research into classification of visual impairment**

In December, researchers from the IPC Research and Development Centre for the Classification of Athletes with Vision Impairment at Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam and Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge attended a British Swimming training camp in Manchester.

The research has been commissioned by the International Federation, World Para Swimming, in order to improve future VI classification. British swimmers underwent a new battery of vision tests designed to capture how different aspects of visual function such as contrast sensitivity, depth perception, sensitivity to bright light, and perception of movement affects their ability to race.

Craig Nicholson, British Swimming's Performance Pathway Manager said: "It's encouraging to see the sport take proactive steps to evolve classification for visually impaired swimmers. The tests carried out as part of this research are very interesting because they look to replicate critical elements of swimming performance and how vision affects them. The outcome of this research should allow classification for visually impaired swimmers to become more specific to the sport in the future."



## Sarah Leighton steps down as Wheelchair Rugby's Head Classifier for Europe

Britain's Sarah Leighton has decided to step down from her role as International Wheelchair Rugby Federation's Head Classifier for the European Zone.

Sarah said: "after Rio I felt that I needed a break from classifying in wheelchair rugby. It's been great contributing to the rule changes that have seen the sport evolve, but the time is now right for someone else to take this responsibility on. I am looking forward to taking a break and have not ruled out returning to the sport once I've recharged my batteries!"



## Content for future issues

The next edition of the BPA's Classification Newsletter will be issued by 30 April 2017.

If you have content you would like to be included please email the BPA's Classification Manager, [Iain Gowans](#).

© British Paralympic Association  
60 Charlotte Street,  
London W1T 2NU  
Tel: [+44 \(0\)20 7842 5789](tel:+442078425789)  
Fax: [+44 \(0\)20 7842 5777](tel:+442078425777)  
Email: [info@paralympics.org.uk](mailto:info@paralympics.org.uk)

Web: [www.paralympics.org.uk](http://www.paralympics.org.uk)

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